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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 000468

SIPDIS

STATE FOR WHA/CCA, WHA/CEN, AND WHA/PPC
STATE FOR DRL AND DRL/MLA
STATE FOR INR/AN/IAA, IO, AND USUN

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [CU](#) [HO](#) [CHR](#)

SUBJECT: HONDURAS STILL UNWILLING TO TAKE LEAD IN DRAFTING
UNCHR CUBA RESOLUTION

REF: A. TEGUCIGALPA 365

- [B](#). TEGUCIGALPA 307
- [C](#). STATE 20401
- [D](#). STATE 13279
- [E](#). 03 STATE 313469
- [F](#). 03 TEGUCIGALPA 2866

Classified By: Ambassador Larry Palmer, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#). (C) Ambassador and Political Counselor met with Minister of Presidency Luis Cosenza on the draft resolution (Ref C) on February 25 and 26. (Note: President Ricardo Maduro and Foreign Minister Leonidas Rosa Bautista were in Guatemala at a Central American Summit on Feb. 25.) Cosenza reviewed the resolution language and U.S. request to sponsor it. He informed us that he could not recommend to President Maduro that Honduras take on the responsibility of being the lead sponsor.

[2](#). (C) Cosenza outlined the following reasons and concerns that impede the Government of Honduras's (GOH) ability to take the lead on this issue. They included: (a) Honduras is not in Cuba's sights at the moment, but sponsoring the resolution would stir up possible Cuban troublemaking in Honduras; (b) Honduras has not named an ambassador to Cuba; (c) Cuba provides medical scholarships to 400 Honduran students and will be increasing that by another 100; (d) Cuba has 200 doctors serving in rural areas in Honduras; and (e) Cuba has not yet agreed to sign the pending maritime boundary accord with Honduras. Cosenza then added that the GOH has a host of "governability" problems that are emerging in Honduras (e.g., an impending 10 cent per gallon gas price hike; labor unions clamoring for pay raises; troops deployed in Iraq which remains unpopular with the public and which makes the Maduro government feel very vulnerable if they should take any casualties. He suggested that becoming involved in a diplomatic confrontation with Cuba at this moment would give another opening for the political opposition to exploit against the GOH.

[3](#). (C) Cosenza suggested the Ambassador meet with Maduro and an appointment has been arranged for March 1 in the late afternoon just before Maduro departs for his visit to Spain.
PALMER